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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DJIBOUTI 000021

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF DECEMBER ACTIVITIES AT AMEMBASSY  
DJIBOUTI

SUMMARY: (U) This is a summary of the activities at Embassy  
Djibouti for the month of December.

#### DJIBOUTI-SOMALIA RELATIONS

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Charge Tim Smith, AF/E Deputy Director Phil Carter and  
POLOff Erin Reed met with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Secretary for Bilateral Relations, Miriam Gumaneh, regarding

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the Djibouti-Somalia relations, as well as, the current state  
of Djibouti-U.S. relations. Ms. Gumaneh described the  
actions of the Djiboutian government in the peace process for  
Somalia. Both parties agreed that Djibouti's role was  
important. Ms. Gumaneh stressed that Somalia needs to make  
its own agreement, but that Djibouti would be willing to act  
as a facilitator.

Mr. Carter assured Ms. Gumaneh that the U.S. position on  
Somalia was the same and questioned the feasibility of the  
process if the TNG did not participate. Mr. Carter addressed  
the U.S. stance on Somaliland/Somalia separation, saying that  
we would like to see the Somaliland region stay stable. He  
also stated that if the peace conference was a failure, the  
U.S. would have to rethink the policy on separation, but  
would follow the lead of the African Union. Ms. Gumaneh  
stated that if the two agreed to separate amicably, the  
African Union would support it.

#### IMF PANEL VISIT

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The International Monetary Fund sent a panel of  
delegates to take stock of the program's progress. The panel  
met with Charge Tim Smith and POLOFF Erin Reed at the  
Embassy December 10, 2003 to inquire about the monies given  
to the Djiboutian government by the U.S. Their main task was  
to reconcile the amount that the 2003 and 2004 Djiboutian  
budgets showed with the amounts reported from the U.S.  
organizations. The members of the IMF panel made it known to  
the Charge and the POLOff that Djibouti would need to show a  
strong track record in economic policy over the next years if  
it were to receive another IMF program.

The panel's visit ended with a Donors, meeting on  
December 13, 2003 to discuss the progress and plan for the  
IMF presence in Djibouti. POLOff Erin Reed and the Econ  
Assistant attended the meeting. The meeting was focused on  
the implementation of a Staff-Monitored Program (SMP) and a  
review of the Djiboutian economic budget. The SMP is to be  
the mechanism through which the Djiboutian government can  
build a track record, after which the IMF will consider  
whether the country is sufficiently dedicated to policy  
reform to receive a Fund Financial Arrangement. The  
governments actions will be closely monitored by a permanent  
representative from the IMF here in Djibouti and several  
Article IV consultations.

#### DJIBOUTIAN OFFICIALS VISIT TO IRAN

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President Ismail Omar Guelleh and several cabinet  
officials made a state visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran  
(IRI). The agenda was discussions of increased cooperation  
between the two governments. The IRI and Djibouti signed a  
number of memoranda on cooperation in the economic,  
industrial and mining sectors. The agreements emphasized the  
need for broadening the economic ties between the two  
countries, private and government sectors. Several programs  
to aid the Republic of Djibouti were also granted. A loan was  
granted for building a new office for the Djiboutian National  
Assembly and a commercial center. The Iranian Red Cross also  
promised to help in Djibouti's health program. In the  
education domain, Iran promised to grant scholarships to  
students majoring in computer science.  
Discussions also included the African continent's conflicts,  
fighting and crisis. President Khatami complimented  
President Guelleh's effort in restoring of peace and  
stability in Somalia.

The two parties condemned the atrocities and violence of  
Sharon's government against Palestinian people. They also  
condemned those who try to distort the image of Islam. They  
also lashed out at any act of terrorism.  
On Iraq issues, they reaffirmed the need to preserve Iraq's  
territorial integrity, national unity and called for  
withdrawal of occupiers from the country and led the people  
govern their own country.  
The two leaders called for peaceful application of nuclear  
technology for all members of the NPT.

EXXON MOBIL'S CLAIM AGAINST THE DJIBOUTIAN JUDICIARY

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This situation is ongoing; a full reporting cable will be submitted after the Djiboutian government takes action. In brief, the three major oil companies in Djibouti ) ExxonMobil, Shell and Total ) have several lawsuits pending in the courts. Fines have been tallied against the companies based on blatantly altered documents overturning previous appeals. The exemplars given to the Charge, in a meeting with ExxonMobil representative Alain Adam on December 10, 2003, showed portions of previous court documents whited-out and altered to reverse the decisions.

After visiting the Ministers of Justice and of the Presidency, the Government of Djibouti (GoD) has not taken any action other than to say there would be an investigation done internally at the Ministry of Justice. The attitude of the GoD is that this is a very serious issue and they would remedy it. However, in a meeting December 22, 2003 the Minister of the Presidency in charge of foreign investment seemed disinterested and the impression was that this problem would not be immediately fixed.

Embassy Djibouti has been reluctant to submit the National Trade Estimate reporting cable as a result of this flagrant misuse of justice. This suit would cause a severely negative change to the NTE if included. Embassy Djibouti relayed this fact to the Minister of the Presidency Osman, indicating that if no immediate action were taken to remedy this case there would be significant potential damage to the impression of the transparency of the government and the judiciary. Minister Osman replied that if we reported so negatively in this document we would be punishing the entire country for the actions of individuals.

JOINT CHIEFS/ROBIN WILLIAMS, VISIT TO CAMP LEMONIER ON RTD

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Embassy Djibouti provided footage, photos and a press release to Radio-TV Djibouti of the Joint Chiefs of Staff/Robin Williams USO Christmas visit to Camp Lemonier. RTD aired a full three minutes of footage with staging that included the American Flag and a presentation to Williams by General Robeson. Response has been positive from the Djiboutian public.

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